Lessons from the quest for artificial consciousness: the emergence criterion, insight-oriented AI, and Imago Dei

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Abstract-

There are several lessons that can already be drawn from the current research programs on strong AI and building conscious machines, even if they arguably have not produced fruits yet. The first one is that functionalist approaches to consciousness do not account for the key importance of subjective experience and can be easily confounded by the way in which algorithms work and succeed. Authenticity and emergence are key concepts that can be useful in discerning valid approaches versus invalid ones and can clarify instances where algorithms are considered conscious, such as Sophia or LaMDA. Subjectivity and embeddedness become key notions that should also lead us to re-examine the ethics of decision delegation. In addition, the focus on subjective experience shifts what is relevant in our understanding of ourselves as human beings and as an image of God, namely, in de-emphasizing intellectuality in favor of experience and contemplation over action.

Index Terms- artificial intelligence; consciousness; human rights; Imago Dei

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